



F39 Teaching of Denture Marking Methods in Dental Schools in the United Kingdom and United States

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After attending this presentation, attendees will learn about: (1) differences between the United States and United Kingdom in denture marking, (2) differences in the teaching of denture marking in the United Kingdom and United States, and (3) the importance of denture marking in identification of individuals.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by describing the teaching of denture marking in United States and United Kingdom dental schools.

The importance of placing identification marks in dentures has long been acknowledged by the dental profession. Weissenstein first proposed that dentures should have some form of identifiable marking in 1931. However, despite calls over many years from both the forensic and dental communities for legislation in support of mandatory denture identification in the United Kingdom, there remains a bewildering sense of apathy towards addressing the problem. More recent work done by Cunningham and Reddick (1993) and Richmond and Pretty (2007) further suggests that such ambivalence toward the practice of denture marking appears to exist more within the dental profession than the general public. This perception is augmented by information from their studies indicating that an overwhelming majority of patients appear very much in favor of concept and that a great many were unaware that their dentures could actually be marked.

The purpose of this study was to determine if denture marking methods were taught to students in dental schools in both the United Kingdom and the United States and if so, what methods were demonstrated. In those schools where denture marking was not taught, reasons why were sought to determine the barriers to the implementation of routine denture marking.

A questionnaire was sent to all the dental schools in the United Kingdom and a total of 16 United States schools. Anonymity was assured to all schools. Fourteen responses were returned from the United Kingdom (100%) and twelve from the United States (75%). In the United Kingdom 67% of schools taught a method of denture labeling, in the United States 86%. In both instances the same results were found for dentures produced by students and those produced by staff members. In the United Kingdom, consultant's dentures were marked 78% of the time; slightly higher than for other grades of staff.

In those schools where denture labeling was not routinely undertaken, 50% of United Kingdom and 23% of United States schools felt that they would like to introduce it. The most popular denture marking system in both countries was an inclusion technique. In the United States, those states with obligatory denture marking, 100% of schools taught a system that was in line with the recommended state legislation.

Sixty-four percent (64%) of United Kingdom and fifty-six (56%) percent of United States dental schools felt that if cost were not an option, they would consider using an RFID chip for their denture marking. Thirty-five percent (35%) of United Kingdom and twenty-nine percent (29%) of United States schools commented that personal privacy issues would be of concern with this system. Seventy-five percent (75%) of United Kingdom and eighty percent (80%) of United States schools felt that denture marking should be a legal requirement.

Denture marking is simple and cost effective means of identifying edentulous. Further work is required within dental education to ensure that dental and technical students are exposed to denture labeling methodologies to ensure that, when in practice, they are able to offer their patients an esthetically suitable marking system that is also resilient to common postmortem assaults.

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